

LEARNING TO SWIM.

Next Generation Won't Be as Helpless in Water as Present.

Scores of people owe their escape from the Eastland disaster to their ability to swim. Other scores were pulled out by fellow passengers who could swim. Had every one on the boat been able to swim the death list would probably have been reduced one-half. This is not saying that many people who could swim were not drowned, or that being able to swim would always mean escape. The point we wish to make is that, other things being equal, the swimmer has a much greater chance to escape. The water into which the people on the Eastland were thrown was not cold. A swimmer could easily make sure in it, as many did. Usually in such accidents that is the case. What a pity, then, that more people cannot swim!

Why can they not swim? That is easily answered. They have no adequate opportunity to learn. True, there are swimming pools all over a big city, but they are comparatively new. The popularity of bathing has only arisen in St. Louis with the opening of public pools like that in Fairgrounds Park. Its growth will depend upon the increase of the opportunity. People cannot be kept out of the water if the water is made safe. It is safe at the public pools. Life savers are on guard and drownings are unknown. The next generation will not be as helpless in the water as this one is. Thanks to the increasing opportunities to learn how to swim, people thrown into the water will not be out of their element to such a degree. Many of those who can swim will get out, and they will pull out others.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

5 Hanged for Witchcraft at Salem.

The episode in Massachusetts history known as "Salem witchcraft" astonishes the civilized world, and to this day is a matter for wonderment. It began in 1688, when a girl in Danvers, a part of Salem, accused a maid-servant of theft. The servant's mother, an Irish woman, vehemently declared that the charge was false, whereupon the complainant accused the woman of having bewitched her. Some of the girl's family joined her in the accusation, and they alternately simulated deafness, dumbness and blindness, at times barking like dogs and purring like cats.

The Rev. Cotton Mather, a prominent clergyman of the time, was a firm believer in witchcraft. He hastened to Danvers with other clergymen as superstitious as himself, and they spent the whole day there in fasting and prayer. They were satisfied that the poor woman was a witch, and they had the additional satisfaction of seeing her hanged. Mather preached a sermon against witchcraft, and it was printed and scattered broadcast among the people, bearing terrible fruit not long afterward.

In 1692 an epidemic disease resembling epilepsy broke out in Danvers. The physicians could not control it and, with Mather's sermon before them, they ascribed the epidemic to witchcraft. A belief that evil spirits in the form of witches were afflicting the people took possession of their minds and there was a state of terror for six months. Accusations became so numerous that no person was safe from suspicion and its consequences, and many innocent persons suffered.

On August 19 two women and three men—Bridget Bishop, Martha Carrier, John Proctor, John Willard and George Burrows, the latter an exemplary clergyman—were hanged for witchcraft. During the prevalence of the terrible delusion in the spring and summer of 1692 nineteen persons were hanged, one was killed by the horrible punishment of pressing to death, fifty-five were frightened or tortured into confession of guilt, and fully two hundred were named as worthy of arrest.

Finally a citizen of Andover was accused of witchcraft, and being wiser and bolder than the magistrates and clergy, he caused the arrest of his accuser on a charge of defamation of character, claiming damages in the sum of 1,000 pounds. The public was in sympathy with him, and the spell was instantly broken. Many of the accusers came forward and published solemn recantations or denials of the truth of their testimony, which had been given, they said, to save their own lives. The parish minister at Danvers, in whose family the "affliction" started, was compelled to leave the country. The legislature appointed a general fast and supplication, and Judge Sewall, who had presided at many of the witchcraft trials, stood up in church on the fast day and implored the prayers of the people that the errors which he had committed "might not be visited by the judgments of an avenging God on his country, his family and himself." Thus ended the delusion which long vexed Salem, but Cotton Mather clung to his belief in witches and wrote in support of the belief.—Washington Post.

HUMORS OF CASTE.

How Rules Governing Travel, Study and Dining Are Broken.

Though going to foreign countries by crossing the ocean is to break one's caste, hundreds of young Indians are now visiting Europe and America in pursuit of modern scientific and industrial education, says the Century Magazine. Indeed, so numerous are the families affected that public opinion has compelled the Brahmins to ordain that no loss of caste shall result from going abroad for education. The step next contemplated is to have merchants and other business men exempted from the ban. It is known that in time all classes of travelers will be exempted.

It is not so much the going abroad that is objected to as the eating of forbidden food, as beef, pork and chicken or any food cooked by foreigners. To obviate partly this difficulty the Hindus have just organized a steamship line, the Indian Peninsula company, between Bombay and London. On board the ship of this line Hindu caste rules are studiously observed. This company is soon to open a hotel in London for the caste people of India, so that Hindu students, merchants and travelers may go to London, reside for any length of time and still return home without breaking their caste.

Caste rules prohibit people of different castes dining together. These rules, however, are broken by the rising generation in schools and colleges. The students, defying the cold and calculating conservatives, use the school and college buildings for dinner parties, where Hindus and Mohammedans, Christians and Jains. Buddhists and atheists, break bread together. In Benares, the stronghold of Brahmanical orthodoxy, intercaste dinners are of common occurrence. The Indian leaders in reform have gone a step further. On a public occasion they dined publicly with Europeans in the town hall of Calcutta. These dinners are helping break down obnoxious rules and thus are establishing dinner table democracy.

Medicine in War.

The London Lancet finds reasonable cause for encouragement to Great Britain in the medical situation at the end of the first year of the war, says the New York Sun. There have been no great epidemics and the only critical health situation—the crisis in Serbia—was met and handled successfully.

"The story of Serbia is a triumph of preventive medicine," says the Lancet, "and the United States and Great Britain between them may lay claim to the credit that here accrues to scientific medicine. There was a time when the Serbians, who had valiantly beaten off huge crowds of invaders, looked likely to perish en masse from disease, and the stories of the epidemics of typhus at the beginning of last winter, terrible as they were, are now known to have by no means exaggerated the real plight. American generosity, the British Red Cross society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and private charity alike, came to the rescue; hospitals were run up, the sick segregated and treated, crusades of cleanliness were inaugurated and, with something of the same rapidity with which disease got a grip on the country, that grip was made to relax."

The Lancet says that medically Russia does not suffer, except from her "unmanageable geography," which equally handicaps the handling of troops and war supplies. There is praise for the thoroughness and competence of German handling of the sick and wounded.

The Majesty of the Law.

The difficult part of legislation is inserting the majesty in the proper proportion. Almost any old legislator can pass laws, but when they try to make them majestic, nine out of ten legislators, perhaps more, fail utterly. It is not the law itself that inspires people with respect, and makes them tremble and genuflect and kowtow; it is the majesty of the law. Occasionally, however, we will find a law that has too much majesty, so much that all the common sense has been crowded out. This is as bad as not enough. There are many laws on our statute books, but only a very few of them are properly majesticated. Hence the confusion and other annoyances that make contempt of court so common these days.—Life.

And How, Indeed?

Charlie and Nancy had quarreled. After their supper mother tried to re-establish friendly relations. She told them of the Bible verse: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." "Now, Charlie," she pleaded, "are you going to let the sun go down on your wrath?" Charlie squirmed a little. Then said: "Well, how can I stop it?"

GREAT CELEBRATION.

At Charleston, December 13th to 17th, 1915.

The Southern Commercial congress will be held at Charleston December 13th to 17th, 1915. This is an association of prominent business men



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from all over the South and meetings are held each year for the purpose of discussing business welfare, both of the manufacturer and of the farmer. Last year the congress was held at Oklahoma City and the year before at Mobile. This year the meeting is to be held at Charleston and very many men of prominent

business, social and public life have already accepted invitations to be present. At least four members of the cabinet of the president of the United States will be present at the meeting.

A squadron of the Atlantic Fleet, torpedo boats, submarines and torpedo boat destroyers, as well as

dreadnaughts, will be in the Charleston harbor, open for inspection of the public, December 14th and 15th, and visitors at this time will also have the pleasure of seeing a magnificent carnival.

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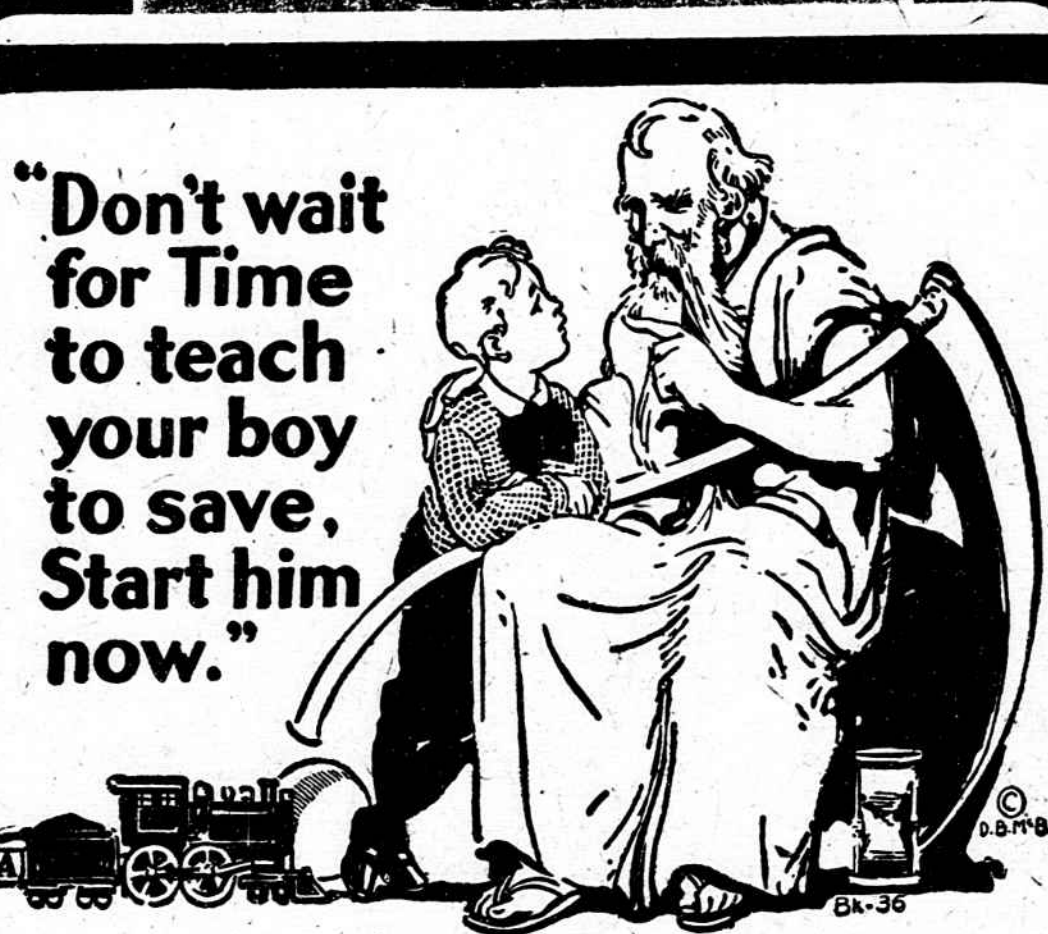
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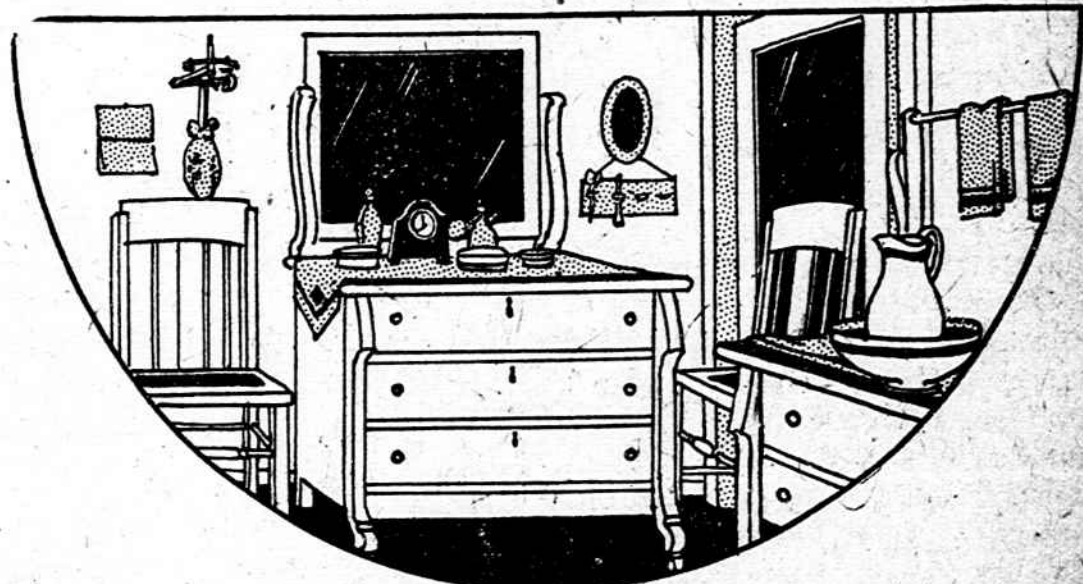
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